The Pagan Library

Elemental Cauldrons

Anon

Using a cauldron, symbol of inspiration and rebirth, has brought new dimensions to both group and solitary work. A cauldron decorates the center of the Circle during Lesser Sabbats. An air cauldron at a spring rite creates a misty, magical quality for the ceremony. In summer, the cauldron will flash and spark. A blue flame burns mysteriously within the Water cauldron during the autumn festival. Throughout Yule, the Earth cauldron burns steadfast and constant. During moon rites, when magick is done, we write the purpose of our working on flash papers and toss them into the burning cauldron while chanting.

A working cauldron should be of cast iron, with a tight-fitting lid, three sturdy legs, and a strong handle. Season your cauldron before using it for the first time. Pour in generous helping of salt and lighter fluid, slosh it up to the rim and wipe dry. For indoor use it MUST have a fireproof base or your workings will summon up yellow-coated salamander spirits from the fire department.

Earth Cauldron

Layer salt, wax shavings, three powered or ground herbs, fighter fluid and ivy leaves in the cauldron while focus and chanting. Use a candle to light it. When the smoke starts to roll, extinguish the cauldron by putting the lid on.

Air Cauldron

Using tongs, put a chunk of dry ice is a small glass or ceramic bowl and place the bowl on a cloth in the bottom of the cauldron. Allow the cauldron to smoke as long as the ice lasts. The mists create excellent images for scrying.

Fire Cauldron

Cover the inside bottom with dirt or sand to dissipate heat. Light incense charcoal and add either salt peter for flame and spark or flash powder for a different but spectacular effect. To assist in releasing or firing off peak energy, try using flash "bombs". Make a small pocket in a piece of flash paper, fill with flash powder and tie with thread. The "bomb" should be about the size of your smallest fingernail. The results are spectacularly bright, so use the powder sparingly. Don't look directly at the flash as you drop the "bomb" in the cauldron.

Water Cauldron

At least seven days before the ritual, place equal quantities of three appropriate herbs in a pint glass jar. Fill the rest of the jar with Everclear (200 proof alcohol), cap tightly, and shake gently while concentrating on the purpose of the ritual. Add a chant if its feels right. Let the jar rest in a dark, warm spot and shake twice daily, charging with purpose. Before the ritual, place a fireproof ceramic or glass bowl in the cauldron. Pour in the herb mixture, being careful none spills into the cauldron. Light with a candle to produce a beautiful blue flame.

The cauldron, as the fifth elemental spirit, symbolizes inspiration, rebirth, illumination and rejuvenation. Use a Fire cauldron with salt peter to cast a Circle. Use the mists of an Air cauldron for an initiation. Burn away hate, prejudice and negative self-images, with a Water cauldron. The Earth cauldron is ideal for indoor Beltane rites.

Remember to place a burning cauldron on a fireproof surface. Practice safety when using any volatile materials and you will enjoy your cauldron for many rites.

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